Setting up of a Bench of High Court and Supreme Court

393. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received representation to set up a Bench of the Kerala High Court at Thiruvananthapuram and a Bench of Supreme Court in the south;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reaction of Government to such a proposal; and

(d) the action Government would take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ): (a) Representations have been received from time to time from various sources for establishment of Benches of High Courts including that of the Kerala High Court and Supreme Court away from their principal seats.

(b) to (d) Proposal for setting up of a Bench of the High Court is considered on receipt of a complete proposal from the State Government in consultation with the Chief Justice of the High Court. The Chief Justice of Kerala High Court has informed that the High Court has always taken a consistent stand that the establishment of a Bench of the High Court at Thiruvananthapuram is not suitable or feasible.

Similarly, the Chief Justice of the India as well as the Full Court have been consistently opposed to the proposal for setting up of the Benches of the Supreme Court in other parts of the country.

Transparency in selection of judges

394. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the lack of transparency in selection procedure is resulting in less deserving candidates being selected to judicial positions in High Courts and the Supreme Court; and

(b) the steps being taken by Government to make the selection of judges to the High Courts and Supreme Court transparent?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Pursuant to the Supreme Court Judgement of October 6, 1993 in the Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record & Anr. *Vs.* Union of India, read with the Advisory Opinion of October 28, 1998, the entire process of initiation of proposal for appointment of a Judge of Supreme Court lies with the Chief Justice of India and for the appointment of a Judge of a High Court, with the Chief Justice of that High Court. There is no proposal to change the procedure of selection of the Judges.

Setting up of Supreme Court Benches

395. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to set up four Supreme Court Benches in the country;

(b) whether the Supreme Court has endorsed the proposal;